

BIOGRAPHY OF ORIGINAL PIONEER

EUDORA LAVINA BIGELOW MECHAM

CAME TO UTAH IN 1868

WRITTEN BY

JOYCE KLING HAYMON, HISTORIAN OF CAMP 3,
DAUGHTERS OF UTAH PIONEERS OF UTAH COUNTY.

On Sept. 8, 1860, in the town of Atcheson, Kansas, Eudora Lavina Bigelow was born. Her parents were Asa Bigelow and Julia Ann Cook. Her brothers were Frank and Wm. Bigelow and one sister Annie Bigelow who later married a Meham.

Their early home life in Kansas was similar to that of most farm families of that period--hard work, strictest economy and privation.

About the time that Eudora was approaching the age of eight years her parents, dissatisfied with their Kansas home joined a wagon train that was coming to Utah. Of course they could only take their most necessary articles with a family to provide transportation for and our pioneer related one incident as follows: "On our journey across the plains we ran out of meat and one morning my father decided to take us all in the wagon and go in search of meat and then join up with the wagon train later in the day. Unfortunately we got lost and spent a day and a half in getting back to the road. By this time our water supply was low, so Mother and Father left the wagon by the side of the road and set out on foot in search of a water hole. They found a water hole and as they started to get the water, Mother saw a large rattlesnake coiled and ready to strike. She jumped and screamed at the same time but Father was bitten by the snake. He killed the snake and cut it open to get a piece of flesh to make a poultice to draw out the poison. They went back to their wagon but by the time they arrived there Father was quite sick, so Mother put him to bed and made camp there with the aid of we three small children. Come morning my Father was in a serious condition so Mother hitched up the team and started out hoping to catch up with the wagon train or to run into some one who could give them some help. As we were traveling on we came to a small creek and in descending the steep bank into the creek the horses became frightened and balked, breaking the wagon tongue. Mother was frantic and Father almost dead and only three small children to turn to for help. Coming out of the creek bottom she could see at some distance an encampment of some kind. She mounted one of the horses, not knowing whether it was the wagon train encampment or an Indian village and too desperate to care because she must get help. As she came closer she could see it was a company of soldiers and she told them of her troubles. Two of the men went back to the wagon with her, found a pole and made a tongue for the wagon and brought us to the camp where a doctor brought Father back to health again from his ordeal.

Soon another wagon train came along and we joined with it to finish our journey to Utah.

After our arrival in Utah we went to Heber City to visit our relatives, then later moved to Provo at the place where the old Dahlquist now stands on the corner of 6th West and 6th South, where we lived for four years. From our Provo home we moved to Wallburg, then to St. George and to Fairfield, Utah. My Mother having married a Mr. Carson of Fairfield."

The Johnston Army was encamped near Fairfield at the old Camp Floyd and Eudora Bigelow knew many of the happenings which took place at the Camp. Her girlhood was spent in doing the many and arduous tasks which the country demanded. She helped with the home work, gleaned grain in the fields, dried fruit, made soap and was an expert seamstress and improvised her own patterns. This art proved a blessing in later years when she sewed and dressed her four lovely daughters so beautifully at small expense. It was at Fairfield, Utah that she met and married her husband, George D. Meham, April 14, 1887. They were a congenial couple but Mrs. Meham says, "In our first 22 years of married life it seemed as though I had married a man who liked to be always on the move. We bought and sold twelve times before we finally settled down in our present home at 820 West 10 South in Provo."

They raised a family of four splendid daughters and one son as follows: Julia M. Brim, Minnie M. Ellison Peters, Annie M. Cheever, George E. Meham

and Phoebe M. Snelson.

In their declining years this couple were able to spend the colder part of the winters in California until Mr. Mecham passed away Christmas morning of 1942.

On April 4, 1944, two years after Mr. Mecham passed away, Eudora, with her five children went to the Salt Lake Temple and was sealed to her husband and had the children sealed to them as parents. This had been a long awaited desire and the dearest wish of her life.

Eudora Bigelow Mecham was a sweet character. She was a very likable character and pretty to look at with her regular features, large blue eyes, light brown hair and enhanced by a lovely fair skin. She was a hard-working, honest woman and a wonderful neighbor. She was especially helpful in her later years to her unfortunate niece, Annie Farley who has been severely handicapped by arthritis for a long time. Mrs. Mecham assisted Mrs. Farley and extended many hours and acts of kindness to the Farley family. She enjoyed life to its fullest. She enjoyed her neighbors, friends, gatherings, shows, meetings and read the papers thoroughly, and absorbed the radio and news reels.

She passed away at her home Aug. 7, 1947, leaving a posterity of 1 son, 4 daughters, 13 grand children and 7 great grand children.

This biography was written by,
Joyce Kling Harmon, historian of Camp 3,
Daughters of Utah Pioneers of Utah Co.

Eudora Lavina Bigelow Mecham